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IN GENTLEST
GERMANY

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"My instructions were clear. To bring an open and unprejudiced mind to Germany, that mighty and irresistible nation."

IN GENTLEST
GERMANY
BY HUN SVEDEND
TRANSLATED FROM THE SVENGALESE
BY E. V. LUCAS *WITH*
45 ILLUSTRATIONS AND 1 MAP
BY GEORGE MORROW



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DEDICATORY QUESTION
TO
MY FRIEND AND PATRON
THE GERMAN EMPEROR

“HOW’S YOUR FATHER-LAND?”

ERRATUM

The map facing page 36 has wandered into this volume in error. It belongs rightly to the eulogy of the successes and angelic virtues of the German Armies in the East, on which I am now engaged.

HUN SVEDEND

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IN GENTLEST
GERMANY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

AFTER such a life of travel and adventure as I have led, for my intrepid spirit has taken me into every corner of the earth, there was but one perilous and difficult enterprise left, and that was to visit the German Army in a motor car exceeding the speed limit, and to find not a speck on that sun.

When, therefore, as I was dining *en garçon* with my old friends Dr. Mangold and Herr Wurzel, an invitation came from my august and unconquerable friend the German Emperor saying that what He wanted was the absolutely impartial account of a neutral eye-witness, I jumped at the opportunity and at once took all the necessary goose steps.

My instructions were clear. To bring an open and unprejudiced mind to Germany,



“And most probably Mr. (or Herr) Bernard Shaw”

INTRODUCTORY

that mighty and irresistible nation, which gave birth to so many of the leading spirits of all time—to Goethe, Shakespeare, Beethoven, Wagner, Treitschke, Baedeker, Reinhardt, Tauchnitz, Dernburg, Count Zeppelin, Baron Liebig, and most probably Mr. (or Herr) Bernard Shaw. To view with equally unprejudiced eyes the intellectual capital of the world, Berlin, and the temper of its heroic citizens; to examine every branch of the sublime and unparalleled and unfrightful German Army; to interview God's most intimate friend, that most Christian ruler, the Emperor Himself, and that paragon, His eldest son: and then to set down a faithful account of it all, excusing nothing, disguising nothing, in order that the rest of the world, and in particular America, might at last know the truth as to England's share in provoking this peaceful if somewhat fully-prepared people to war, and judge accordingly. Nothing could be simpler.

Haste was however of the highest importance. At any moment some one else might get the job.



“That paragon, his eldest son”

INTRODUCTORY

Dangerous though the journey from Stockholm to Berlin might be, I would make it to-morrow. No, to-day. No time must be lost.

It was necessary to keep the whole matter a dark secret, or my countrymen would, I knew, never let me go. The risks of such fast motoring are very great. And not only Sweden—what might Oxford and Cambridge think of one of their D.C.L.s thus exposing himself? I therefore said nothing, but let it be thought that I and my valise were merely leaving for another week end in Thibet.



CHAPTER II

THE MODERN ATHENS

I REACH this great city, which took its name from my mother, after an eventful journey.

My train brings many soldiers and officers to the capital : strong and powerful specimens of the Teutonic type, but too stout for perfect symmetry. Yet no one can be stout with more charm than a German. As with everything else that these calm and powerful people do, so do they grow stout.

I notice that many of them wear glasses, an attractive trait and one illustrative of German candour and straight-dealing. The English are as a race myopic, but such is the national hypocrisy that they refuse to admit to the limitation. But how bitterly are they paying for it by defective aim !

THE MODERN ATHENS

All the men in my train are animated by but one thought—or possibly it is two: to



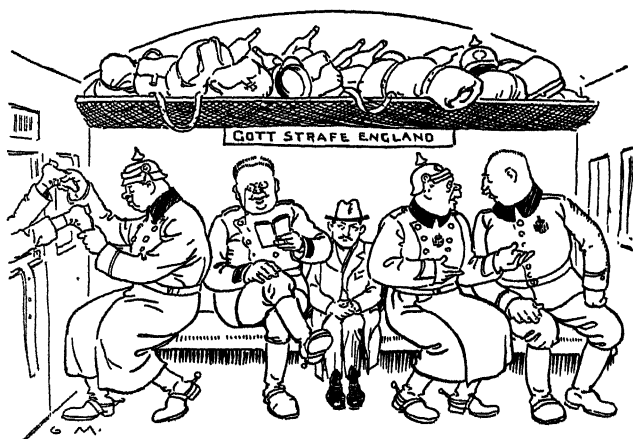
“No one can be stout with more charm than a German”

conquer or to die. About the result they have no doubt. They *must* win, otherwise

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

their country is lost. Such is the direct crystal-like reasoning of this colossal race.

Through the windows on either side I see Germany. Uplifting thought, to be



"Now and then one rises swiftly and masterfully to push a too talkative civilian through the window"

bounded by Germany east and west. The Land of Promise; even more, the Land of Performance! The Land (until lately) of J. Ellis Barker. The Land of Count Bernstorff, who found Washington such a bad lie. Thibet was wonderful—but Germany!

The officers who crowd my compartment

THE MODERN ATHENS

—and do not yet know who I am, or they would not stamp so on my toes—are the very pick of German chivalry. Their conversation is wholly of the war and the effrontery of the Allies. Now and then one rises swiftly and masterfully to push a too talkative civilian through the window, but otherwise they pay no attention to anything around them. The war is all. With such a spirit in its leaders who can doubt the final German triumph ?

The train draws up periodically at stations, in the superb methodical German way. Passengers get out or get in, as the case may be, but equally with precision and aplomb. No one falls under the wheels. It is all marvellous.

On the platform is often an officer—self-contained, massive, dignified, absolute: one of those machines from the gods which have made Germany what it is. I watch them, fascinated, till the efficient station-master with an exquisite authoritative gesture speeds the train once more towards the city of destiny.



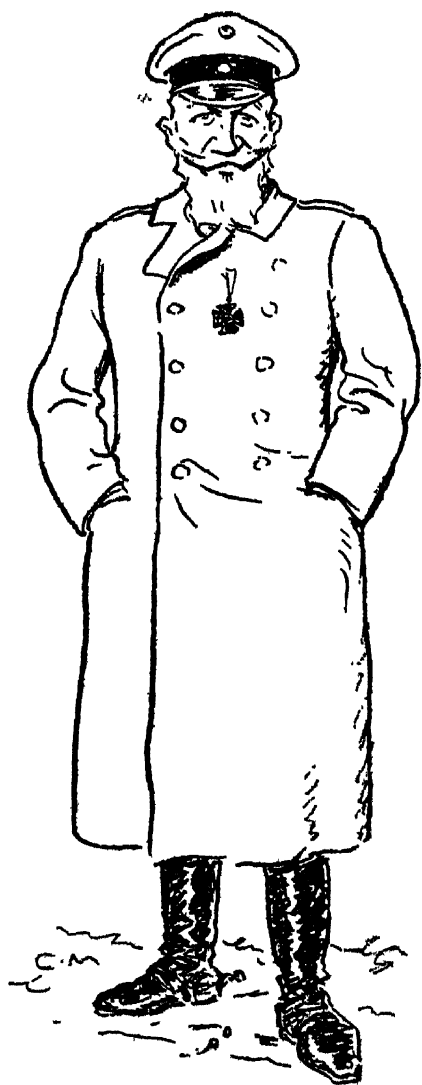
“An officer, self-contained, massive, dignified,
absolute”

THE MODERN ATHENS

The train stops finally. We are in Berlin. How gay and confident the city is! Not a single trench is visible. No cannon fire is to be heard. Not a trace of the so-called frightfulness. Victory everywhere.

As we pass through the streets I recall scenes of triumph at my lectures in Berlin. The sublime Emperor Himself present; the Crown Prince listening as one in a dream. Nobody coughing; every one spell-bound; pins dropping with the sound of "Jack Johnsons." It would be terrible were I to find anything short of perfection during my observations. Impossible!

Once in my hotel I begin to think seriously about my great mission. Why am I undertaking it? To write a book. Yes, but what kind of a book? There will be whole libraries of books on this war—how will mine differ from the others? Here I have what I think is an inspiration. It will be the best. It will be the most vivid, the most actual, the most truthful. Not only shall I describe what I see, but I shall reflect and moralize. I will pass the war



General Bernhardt, the G, B, S. of Germany

THE MODERN ATHENS

through the alembic of my brain—Hun Svedend's brain.

It shall be practical as well as theoretical and philosophical. I will learn how war is carried on. From my motor-car I will see everything and photograph everything. The result must be as useful to Swedish officers as to English statesmen.

I will study the *geist* (spirit) of the war, its psychology. Here my camera will be invaluable. I will be the new Tacitus. I will, in short, think as I have not thought since those wonderful solitary nights on the Great Gromboolian Plain.

Because, you see, this is no ordinary war. The great peaceful German nation is on one side, with its noble Austrian and Turkish allies, and on the other are all the inferior races, the English, the French, the Russians.

As a specimen of my powers of foresight and statecraft, I say to myself: "Whatever the result, there must be in Europe certain changes."

CHAPTER III

PREPARATIONS FOR THE CAMPAIGN

HAVING thus made ready for action, I leap into a taxi and visit the War Office.

An awning had been erected, and carpet laid down for me.

“Sir Hun Svedend, I believe?” says the smiling officer, General von Spitzbuben, one of the most charming and courteous Germans whom I have ever met.

“No longer Sir Hun,” I reply. “I dropped that English title directly I decided to become impartial.”

We embraced.

“That will be a blow to India,” he added, feelingly. “You are a K.C.I.E., is it not? Still, I dare say there may be compensations . . . Who knows?”

He seemed to have some affection of the

PREPARATIONS

left eyelid, but otherwise was a magnificent specimen of his race, with highly magnifying pince-nez, rich physical contours, and



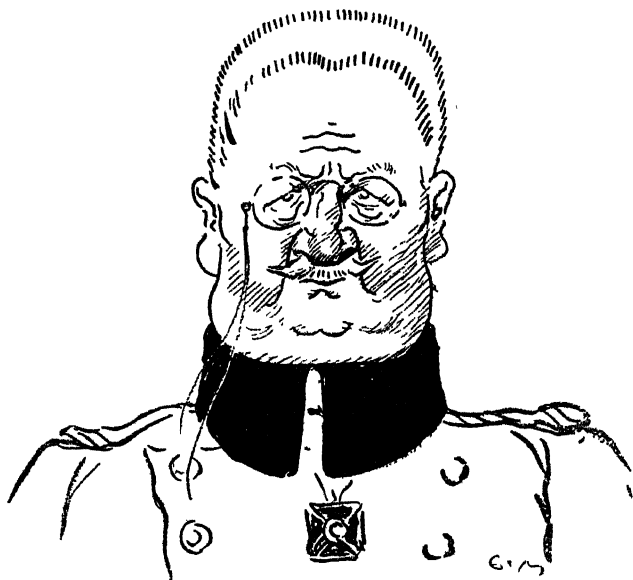
At the War Office

little to impair the ivory whiteness of his scalp.

He told me that a motor-car was at my service, and my chauffeur would be no

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

less a personage than his Serenity Prince Ubermuth. "The authorities are very keen



"One of the most charming and courteous Germans
whom I have ever met"

on your impartiality," he said. "Hence
these facilities."

Again his poor eyelid fluttered.

I thanked him, and he pressed a button
for the Prince.

A charming man enters the room and is

PREPARATIONS

introduced to me and told what his duties are.

He seems spell-bound by my personality.

I ask him what he thinks about our programme, and he replies that he is surprised at the privilege of taking *me*, of all people, to the theatre of war. I assure him that it pleases me greatly to have *him* as my companion.

I feel confident that we shall hit it off together.

I ask General von Spitzbuben to give me an idea of my itinerary. "We go through the Champagne district soon?" I enquire.

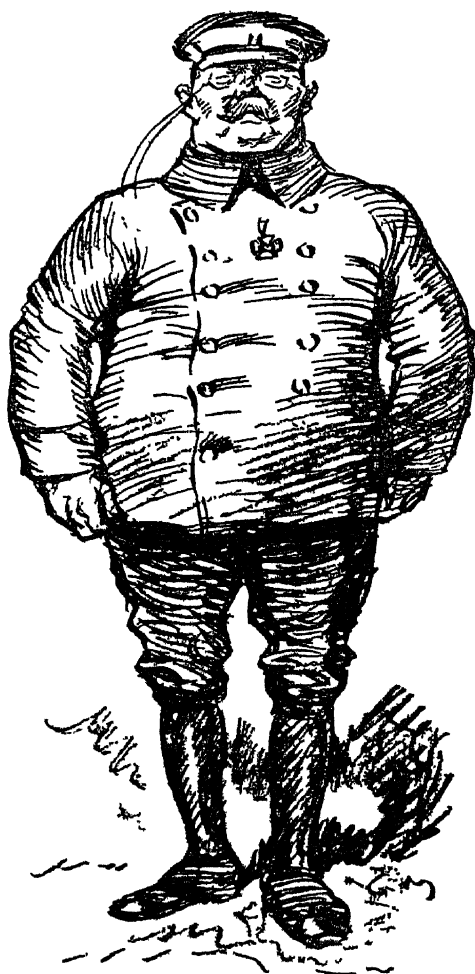
To my great disappointment he says no.

"But later?" I suggest.

"That is as it may be," is his reply.

I confess that this is a blow; but one must be philosophic. The reward must not anticipate the deed.

All then is ready. With a prince for my chauffeur and a pass signed by the commander-in-chief permitting me to go wherever I wish, I am in clover indeed. Never was a mission of impartial observa-



“A charming man enters the room”

PREPARATIONS

tion begun under more favourable conditions.

“If I don’t take care,” I say to myself. “I shall end by liking these fellows—even admiring them.”



CHAPTER IV

EN ROUTE TO HEADQUARTERS

WE start at daybreak. We tear down *unter den Linden* (under the lime trees) at a hundred miles an hour. The Brandenburger Tor is blocked by a regiment, but that is nothing to us. We jump it quite naturally, alighting like thistledown on the other side. It is so throughout the journey and I need not refer to it again. We are always going at the rate of from eighty to a hundred English miles an hour, and we jump everything in the way. It is galling to have to compute speed by English miles, but that is the most convenient method. Moreover, one must not be little-minded.

I have my *Baedeker* with me, but by the time I have found the name of the town we are approaching, we have passed

EN ROUTE TO HEADQUARTERS

the next. At Weimar however a burst tyre gave us five minutes to pay our respects to the home of Goethe. As I stood in his study I could not help feeling how happy he would be to be alive now and to read of the triumphs of *Kultur* (culture, German version) on land and sea. Life is full of humour. It is amazing to think that this people, which has produced Goethe, and which now with honour and splendid courage fights on half a dozen fronts, has by the Press of many countries and in fact entire nations been called a people of barbarians! Barbarians, indeed! No barbarian, as I understand the word, ever flew in airships over undefended towns and dropped bombs on civilians. How can the Germans be called barbarians?

On, on, we go. The Prince is a superb driver, and although we have hairbreadth escapes (at which how my old friend Dr. Mangold would gasp, could he only know!) we come through safely. It is wonderful how well the Germans drive. They hold the steering-wheel with two hands and move it from left to right, according to the direction desired.

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

Meanwhile the wheels of their capable cars go round. In fact the efficiency of this people astounds me more every moment.



“My old friend, Dr. Mangold”

One minute we are in Erfurt, the next in Hanau ; then in Frankfurt, where it rejoices our hearts to see that the chief hotel, once the *Englischer Hof*, has been renamed the *Hessischer Hof*.

Now we are in the province of Uhle,

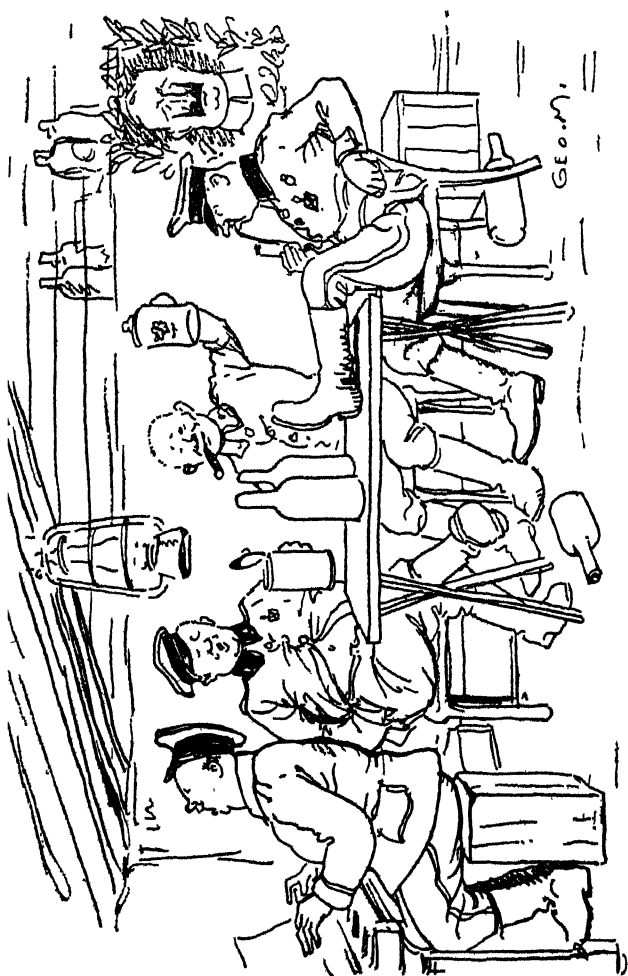
EN ROUTE TO HEADQUARTERS

whence come the Uhlans who form so important a part of the German Army. An hour later we are among the friendly, simple Junkers of Junkerland.

And now we are in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Here one sees no houses wrecked by shells, no people rendered homeless. All are happy, especially the Duchess in her safe retreat.

At last we enter France, where the Germans are now firmly established, and the prospect becomes more interesting. It is a bore not to be going straight to Rheims, or somewhere in the Champagne district; but headquarters must be visited first.

We stop for lunch in the sacristy of a village church, which the soldiers have converted into a messroom. It is sad to find a tabernacle devoted to Christianity turned to such a use, but one must never forget that this war was forced upon Germany. The curé came up while I was photographing the church, and I snapped him too, for I hold that one cannot



“The soldiers were just finishing their simple meal as we entered”

EN ROUTE TO HEADQUARTERS

be too thoughtful for the innocent inhabitants of a conquered race.

The soldiers were just finishing their simple meal as we entered, and were refreshing their tired spirits with harmony and excellent German beer which they had brought with them. Farther in France, I am assured, round about Rheims for example, the army makes free with the wine of the country. A portrait of the Kaiser had been placed on the wall—for these brave fellows never forget their Fatherland's Father.

We go too fast for accurate observation, but I see many scenes of destruction; desolate villages, burnt chateaux, churches in ruins. Surely, I reflect, it is not an unkindly thought towards France to strongly condemn the policy which has brought such nameless misfortune over the north-eastern portions of the republic. When one has seen with one's own eyes all the misery and grief, all the destruction and the ruin, following in the wake of war, surely one cannot with self-respect refrain from loudly condemning

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

the policy which alone is the cause of it all !
Not a church would have been touched had



“ Not a church would have been touched had England
been honourable ”

England been honourable. But how picturesque a ruin can be !

EN ROUTE TO HEADQUARTERS

Here, as elsewhere throughout my motor trips, I see quantities of dead. I think to myself that the sooner I get accustomed to such sights, the better. I reflect also on the good fortune of these fellows to have died for their country. I can think of no greater privilege for a German than to die for Germany. *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*. It is no misfortune to bleed for one's country and one's liberty. That is, of course, when one is a German. I can conceive nothing more depressing and futile than to bleed for France or England, where liberty is unknown and a foul policy poisons the air. But of England's contemptible share in this world-struggle, I do not wish to speak. Nor is there need ; Bernard Shaw has done it for me, and for every right-minded observer, in his brave words, which are circulated throughout Germany. But let us resume the joy-ride.

Now and then we meet a band of French prisoners being taken with the utmost kindness and courtesy to their quarters. Whenever I saw French or English prisoners I made it a

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

rule to sketch them and to talk to them. I think that one ought to spread as much happiness in the world as possible. But how different were the two species ! The French, coming from a military nation, always rose and saluted ; the English remained seated. They could not, I feel, have known that I had been knighted.

In conversation both invariably made the same answers. It was not their war ; they personally adored the Germans and Germany ; but one must do as one's misguided rulers instruct. Such was their reply. In every one the love for their chivalrous foe could be seen, shining like a light.

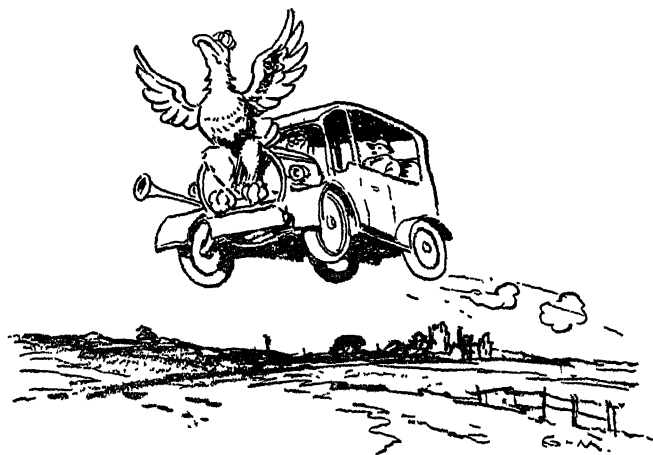
" We should be well able to live on good neighbourly terms with the Germans," said one little company of French captives, all speaking in unison. Of course they would. Every old Alsatian would say the same.

Some scenes I witnessed between prisoners and their guards were inordinately comical. On one such occasion I saw a German gaoler pat his French prisoner on the shoulder and say in a fatherly, patronising voice, "*Hier*

EN ROUTE TO HEADQUARTERS

hast du eine cigarette, mein Bursch " (Here is a cigarette for you, my lad), whereupon the Frenchman gave a friendly nod, accepted the cigarette with a smile and a *merci*, and lit it from the German's pipe. *Himmel!* (heaven) how I laughed !

But enough of humour, even such a rich specimen as this ; for we are approaching sacred ground. The Headquarters are just before us, and here I meet the Emperor.



" We jump everything "

CHAPTER V

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM

I AM bound now to say a few words about a Man Whom I regard as one of the most remarkable figures of the world's history, the most powerful and most impressive ruler of our time, and, moreover, one of the most genial and most fascinating men one could wish to meet.

I wonder, dear reader, if you have guessed Who it is?

To be brief, it is the Source of my Inspiration.

This chapter has given me more trouble than any other, and I have had to pause over every epithet, weighing it, and scrutinizing it from all points of view, in order not to convey the faintest suggestion of impartiality or bias. But now that it is done, I stand by every word, harsh though some perhaps may be thought. My duty has been to tell the truth,

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM

History will bear out as an indisputable fact that Emperor William throughout a quarter of a century has done all in His power to keep the thunders of war from the confines of the German Empire and from Europe. Not only is this my opinion ; it is also Herr Ballin's. On more than one occasion peace, like the sword of Damocles, hung by a Herr. All who know the facts agree that it has been the Emperor's personal intervention which averted a catastrophe. What was the expedition to Agadir if not a manifestation of peacefulness? What was his telegram to Kruger but a desire to show England how friendly He was?

In the end the great and benign Emperor's struggle for the maintenance of peace became hopeless. Try as Germany would, nothing could prevent war, so long as England was represented by such a blood-thirsty gladiator as Sir Edward Grey. This was realized by no one more than by the Emperor Himself, and for this reason He has throughout his reign striven to strengthen the Empire's fighting resources on land and water. At the present moment the fleet is



“Von Tirpitz, whose impressive whiskers have been so useful as a pattern to the devisers of search-lights.”

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM

riding the waters of Kiel Harbour like a gigantic monument to the wise and clear-eyed foresight of its creator. For it is the Emperor himself who, in co-operation with His peerless Grand Admiral von Tirpitz, created the floating fortresses without which Germany's position would have been precarious when England came along with her declaration of war, and which have been so busy ever since. Not a barnacle on their magnificent sides, not a cobweb between their masts, but testifies to the glory of Germany as a sea power.

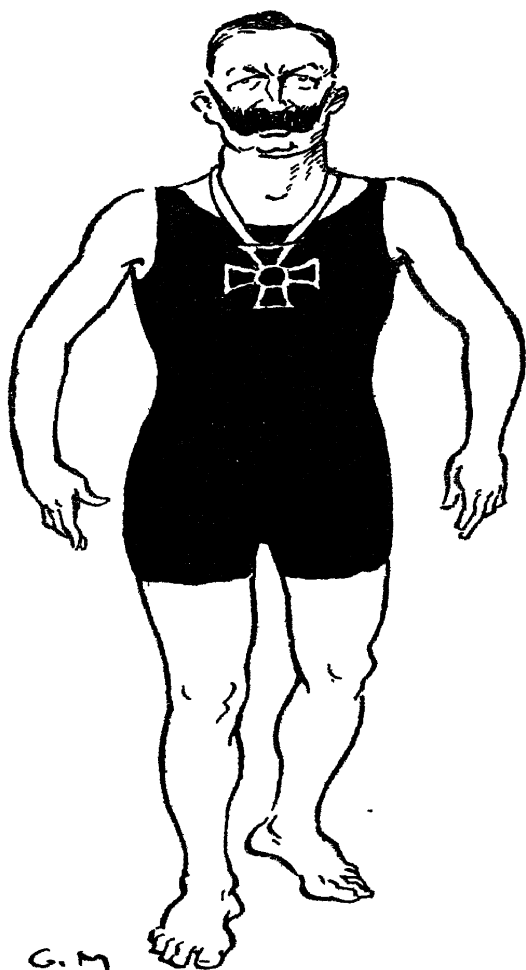
At the stroke of one the door from the vestibule was opened, and Emperor William entered with a firm, quiet step. I had expected Him to come in like a clog-dancer : but no, His step was quiet. It is not a Charlemagne or an Imperator who enters the chancellerie. It is merely an officer in the simplest possible costume, consisting merely of a bathing-suit, to preserve His *Kaiser-lich* (Kaiser-like) form, and an Iron Cross. But it is nevertheless a fascinating and compelling personality, an urbane and

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

courteous man of the world, that we see entering the room. It is a Man Whose quick intuition and superb powers of description reveal the observer and the artist, Whose speech betrays the statesman and even the state, Whose urbanemannerbetokenshumility andkindliness, and Whose military, commanding voice indicates the master, accustomed to be obeyed. In a word—a Corker.

All glances were fixed on the strongly built, well-knit figure of the Emperor William. The room became as quiet as the grave : an awkward simile, but let it stand. One realized that one was in the presence of a Great Personality. The little room, otherwise so humble, now had a deeper significance. Here was the axis, the pivot round which the world's happenings turned. Here was the spot from which the war was directed.

Germany is to be crushed, so say its enemies, among whom I do not, let me state, whatever opinion the reader may have formed, count myself. "You leave it to us," says the German army to its Fatherland. And here in our midst stands

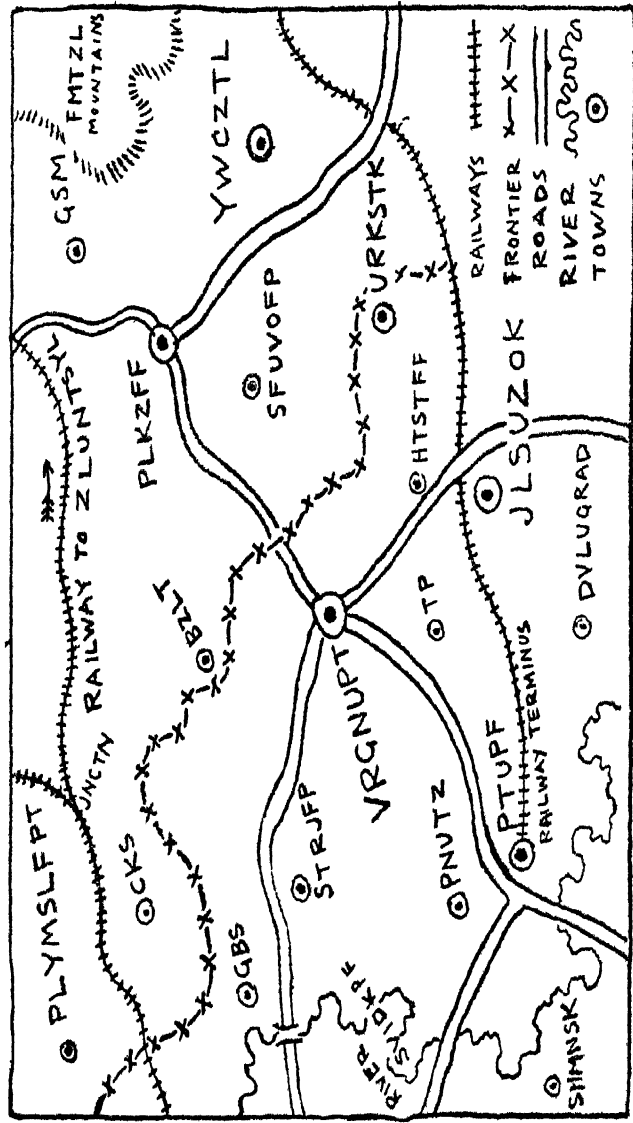


“In the simplest possible costume ”

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

its supreme war-lord, a picture of manliness, complacency, resolution, and honourable frankness. Around Him flit the thoughts and passions of the whole world. He is the object of love, blind confidence and admiration, but also of fear, hate, and calumny. Round Him, the greatest Platonic lover of peace ever known, rages the greatest war of all times, and His name is ringed with strife.

A man who, in a nation sprung from the same race, can arouse such fierce hatred and call forth such outrageous indictments, must indeed possess a very remarkable personality. For otherwise His detractors would leave Him in peace and empty the vials of their wrath on some one else, more formidable still. Who this is, I cannot for the moment say ; but you see what I mean. Yet all that calumny, meanness, and craven fear can inspire has been poured on His head. The English even employ their governesses to traduce Him. But, odd though it may sound, in the whole of Germany, throughout the German army, His praises are sung. In the field services, in all the churches of Germany,



Map showing German victories. Every cross marks a triumph

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

everywhere, fervent prayers for His safety are offered up. "You leave it to us," the soldiers may well say to their Emperor, and they on their part know that He will never fail in His duty, and that He will never withdraw a single soldier from the fighting line until Germany's future is assured. This knowledge is enormously gratifying to the men in the ranks.

Happy is the people which, especially in troubled times, possesses such a leader, a chieftain round whom all gather in confidence and whose ability no one doubts. Hence the remarkable and unfailing happiness of the Germans to-day as they contemplate their bread tickets, their idle factories, their silent harbours, their decimated towns, their prizes for the greatest collections of gold coins, and with renewed feverishness wrench off their brass door knobs and relinquish their copper cooking pans. No wonder their confidence increases.

But it is also His eyes that possess a singular magnetic power, and which fascinate all when the Emperor enters. It is

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM

as if the whole room suddenly became



“Bethmann-Hollweg nervously tearing his menu card
into little bits”

lighter, when one meets the glance of the
Emperor's calm, blue eyes. They bespeak

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

first and foremost an iron will and unconquerable energy. They betray a certain melancholy at the thought, the incredible thought, that all may not understand that He is actuated absolutely by His profound devotion to peace and the wish to do what is pleasing unto God and beneficial to His people. They also betray a sparkling wit, an intellect to which nothing human is foreign and a spirit of humour which is irresistible. Were He not an Emperor, one feels, what a success He would make on the Halls! They also betoken honour, love of truth and a steadfast sincerity, firm and indomitable, the spirit of which penetrates to one's very marrow as one meets his glance. What the same eyes would connote in another man, I cannot say.

A good answer never fails to elicit the Emperor's approval, and my replies delighted Him. He is exceedingly impulsive and His conversation is a mixture of earnest and jest. A ready repartee or an amusing tale causes Him to laugh so heartily that His shoulders shake with it. All

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM

monarchs, it has been observed, laugh heartily, yet few to the extent of shoulder-shaking. But the Emperor is unique in everything.



CHAPTER VI

THE IMPERIAL DINNER-PARTY

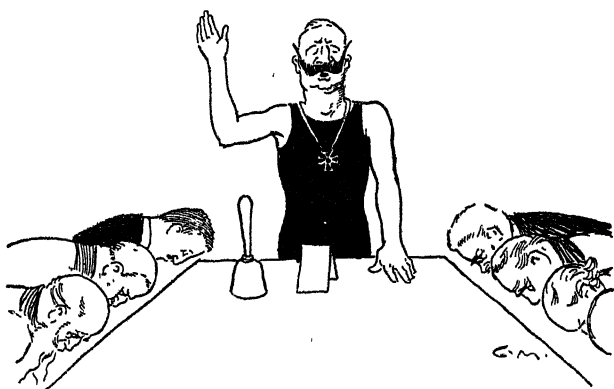
AT the Emperor's bidding we passed into the dining-room. The table was simply laid. The only luxury that could be discovered was a bell of gold placed in front of the Emperor's cover, which, with extraordinary skill, He rang when a new course was to be brought in. The dinner was equally plain, consisting of soup, meat with vegetables, a sweet dish and fruit with claret. The claret was French. The perfidious English cannot make a wine that an enemy could drink.

The grace was short and select : merely the words, spoken with great simplicity by the Emperor himself,—“ God punish England.”

It was a wonderful dinner-party and I made a list on my cuff of the chief guests.

THE IMPERIAL DINNER-PARTY

I was on the Emperor's right hand. Next to me was Bernhardt, a delightful fellow, full of fun and jokes and yet as capable as any of taking interest in a serious remark. Then the jovial Neptune-like figure



"The grace was short and select : merely
' God punish England '"

of Grand Admiral von Tirpitz, the head of Germany's adventurous and intrepid fleet, whose impressive whiskers have been so useful as a pattern to the devisers of searchlights. Then General von Hindenburg (of whose colossal victories the English have, as I repeatedly say, no notion) who had dashed across from the Eastern front for the evening meal—

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

a charming man full of high spirits and wit. He brought some brave stories of the war there. It appears that only two Russians are left alive out of the whole army, and they are prisoners. One is the Grand Duke Nicholas. I liked von Hindenburg and mean to see him again as I hear he has a fast car.

Next to him was Dr. Lyttelton, the Head Master of Eton, with a glad loving smile for all. I asked the famous divine what he had been doing, and he said he had just paid a delightful visit to the playing-fields of Blücher's school, where the battle of Waterloo was won. A kindly, beaming soul, utterly unlike an Englishman.

On the Emperor's left was Herr Ballin, the incorruptible, to whom He confides all his lifelong improvisations as regards statecraft, England and America, which in some mysterious way get into the papers. Next to Herr Ballin was that great and profound author, Professor Gustaf F. Steffen, from whose invaluable work, *War and Culture*, all haters of England are bound to quote. A

THE IMPERIAL DINNER-PARTY

charming man, unaffected and frank. Then came General von Kluck, full of his quips and manly talk, as usual ; Richard Strauss, a delightfully modest person ; and the Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, nervously tearing his menu card into little bits. Herr Reinhardt sat next, and with him a German artist of the highest distinction who has been commissioned to paint a picture of the Emperor directing His army's principal victories. I thought that he looked worried. Next to him was that superb genius Herr Ernst Lissauer, whose charming *chanson*, "The Hymn of Hate," is so deservedly popular. Herr Lissauer, who was wearing the Iron Cross which his lyrical genius won for him, is a dear fellow, and I took to him greatly. He told me that he is now at work on a gay little trifle entitled "*Gott gebe England Bohnen !*" ("God give England beans !") The only notable absentees were Ramsay Macdonald, Count Bernstorff, who has been doing such wonderful things in America and endearing all hearts there, and Herr Krupp, for whom I have a very sincere

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admiration. I asked after him, and found that he was too busy to be there.

The Emperor talked chiefly to me, calling me always "*mein lieber Hun Svedend*" (my



"The Emperor talked chiefly to me"

dear Hun Svedend). He began by reminding me of my last lecture in Berlin, at which He was present, and He conjectured that Thibet, where I had passed through such stirring times, would probably soon be the only country in the world where peace reigned, adding that the thought made Him proud and happy.

It pleased me especially to hear with what

THE IMPERIAL DINNER-PARTY

respect, affection, and sympathy the Emperor referred to France. He regretted the necessity which, contrary to his wish, compelled Him to lead his army against the French, and He hoped that the time would come when Germans and Frenchmen might live on amicable and neighbourly terms with one another—like the lion and the lamb, with the lamb comfortably tucked away inside. For this goal He had striven for twenty-five years, no one could guess how hard, and He hoped that quite a new order of things would arise out of the present war. If the French had any idea of the Emperor's real feelings towards them, they would judge Him very differently. Why they had not this idea, He could not imagine. Surely they were not so puerile as to be influenced by hostile movements of His armies in the field.

I give the exact words, so wistful and loving, of this great, misunderstood Figure. But no one would think that I would take the responsibility of attributing to the Emperor opinions other than those which had fallen from His lips and which I myself had

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heard. It would be an ill reward for the hospitality I met with in the German Army.

First and foremost, said the Emperor, He placed his faith in Krupp—that is to say, in God, but He also relied implicitly on the German people, on this great and noble army which has asserted itself so gloriously, and on His powerful fleet, longing so desperately to fight out its battle on the waves of the open sea. No one would ever know the intensity of the German Navy's longing to get to grips with the enemy on the open sea.

Turning to England, the Emperor's fine eyes filled with tears. "*Himmel!*" (heaven), He exclaimed, "how I loved that country once. But treachery kills every passion. There is something ineradicably untrustworthy, double-faced, in the English character. Who would have thought that a nation which is always wrangling and scolding each other in print, and washing its dirty linen in public, and cannot control even an absurd little place like Ireland, would pull itself together in this strenuous way and declare

THE IMPERIAL DINNER-PARTY

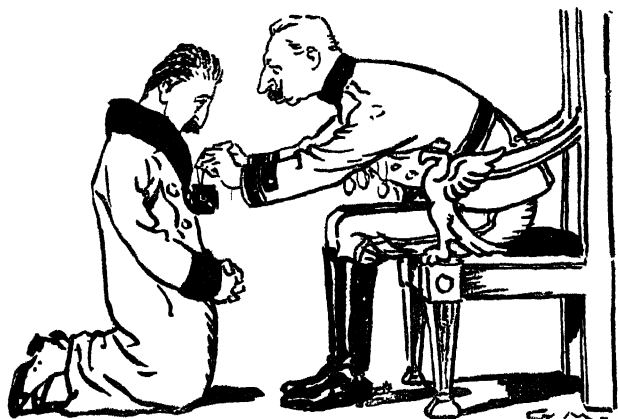
war on me, a blood relation ! I have been tricked, hoodwinked." He brought the Imperial fist down on the table with such a bang that every one present jumped, feeling sure that the grace had come true and God was beginning to punish England. Poor Bethmann-Hollweg swooned.

The conversation turned besides on many other topics. The Emperor said many strong and manly things. He spoke like Gustavus Adolphus when he first landed in Germany with his Swedish Army to bring succour to the Protestant princes and to fight for the liberty of thought and religion on this earth. When the German Emperor talks thus—and to a Swede, too !—then I have truly no time to eat beef and vegetables ; then I prefer to listen and to order sandwiches afterwards, when back in my room at the hotel.

A man of Emperor William's stamp is in His element when, through the force of circumstances, He is compelled to stake all He possesses and, above all, Himself, for the good and glory of His country. But His greatest quality is that He is a human being and that,

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with all His fulminant force, He is humble before God. He might so easily take a high line with God, but He does not. I am not



“With these words he pinned the sacred relic
to my breast”

surprised that God has been so good to Him and to Germany.

Before I left, the proudest moment of my life arrived. The Emperor beckoned me to Him. “*Mein lieber Hun Svedend*” (My dear Hun Svedend), He said, “I wish to confer upon you the most distinguished order of merit in the world—the Iron Cross.”

THE IMPERIAL DINNER-PARTY

"But Sire," I faltered, "I have not earned it."

"You will !" He replied with such confidence as only a German can express.

With these words He pinned the sacred relic to my breast, where it now is and ever will remain.



CHAPTER VII

SEDAN AND 1870

DIRECTLY breakfast is over the next morning, and we have all* sung "The Hymn of Hate," Reinhardt leading us in his rich falsetto, the Prince and I are again on the road. We are now bound for Sedan, and not as I was hoping, Epernay, or Ay, or Rheims.

At a level crossing we are stopped by a troop train, which it is against military regulations to jump. All carriages are decorated with green branches, as if on the way to a midsummer fête. Sentences chalked on the sides of the carriages testify to the high spirits of the passengers: "To dinner in Paris—now waiting"; "Every shot a Russian, every thrust a Frenchman, the

* I am wrong here. My camera informs me that Dr. Lyttelton, although present, kept his lips closed.

SEDAN AND 1870

Serbs must die," and such like jokes. The Germans are always gay, always good prophets.

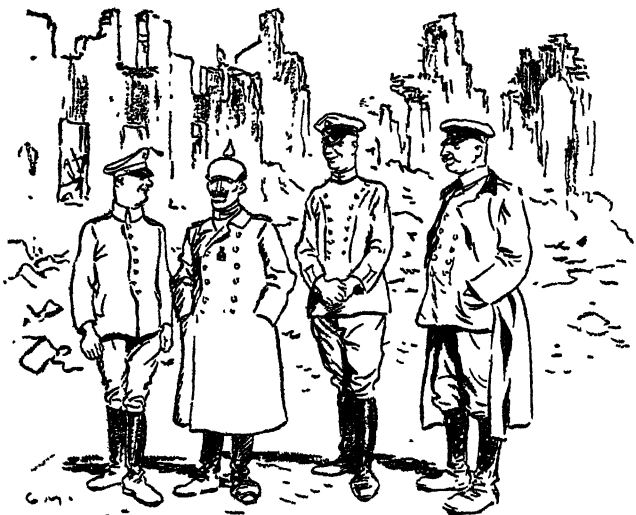
Sedan is now a German town and its normal inhabitants are delighted to be entertaining such gentlemen. A few of the richer folks have gone and left their houses. Such people on their return will find their possessions absolutely untouched. In the house where officers have lived, not a pin will be out of place.

I do not say that among millions of men there may not be a few undesirables, say perhaps two, or even three, though I doubt it, but a studious solicitude for French property as sacred is a German watchword. Wherever any towns, and this applies also to Scarborough in England, seem to have been treated in a spirit of wanton destruction it has been the fault of the inhabitants, who have fired on the invading troops and had therefore to be punished.

Here come a couple of ladies of the higher *bourgeoisie*, perhaps mother and daughter, dressed in black and with long black veils.

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Are they in mourning for fallen relatives, or perhaps for the fate of France? They *cannot* but mourn. They understand better



“A studious solicitude for French property as sacred is a German watchword”

than the common people the position of unhappy France and how unfortunate the policy has been which brought them into this great, sanguinary war.

I smile at them and ask if they will allow me to sketch their quaint *deuil*, but they decline. It is odd how slow people are to

SEDAN AND 1870

recognize blessings. But most angels, I suppose, come in disguise.

At Bellevue I have another cruel and very unexpected disappointment.

The aristocratic and venerable lady who owns the historic chateau where the capitulation of the French Army was signed after Sedan, is still there, bowed with age and grief, and is now witnessing for the second time all the phases of a Franco-German war. Her hair was snow-white and she was bent with age, but one felt nevertheless that she held her head high, and her carriage was proud and commanded respect. Would you believe it, when we asked if we might look over the house, she refused ! We respected her wish, but we could not understand it. Possibly my name was unknown to her.

Our next objective is Donchery, the little town which now inspires, in a twofold measure, such mournful impressions. It was here that General von Moltke, Chief of the German General Staff, and General Wimpffen, the French Commander-in-Chief, discussed the terms of the capitulation late

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at night on the 1st of September, 1870. Count Bismarck, the Prussian Prime Minister, was also present; it was, of course, before his fall—before the present sublime Emperor had detected his incompetence. The house where the negotiations took place has been destroyed in the present war. But Werner's picture remains. This has a most stirring effect on the beholder. To the right, the Germanic iron strength and resolution, which will admit of no compromise; to the left the beaten Frenchmen in their dire misfortune. Could there be a greater or more poignant contrast than is afforded by these two nations—one so deep and true and spiritual, the other so superficial and frothy? Moltke especially attracts our eyes, as he stands there with his hand thrust upon the table, categorically demanding the surrender of the whole French Army, and we may well look with emotion on the picture of the "Iron Chancellor," sitting with his hand on his sword-hilt;—these two men, the great strategist and the great statesman, are just about to lay the founda-

SEDAN AND 1870

tions of the mightiest empire of modern times.

But the central figure of the painting is



“I see the false Sir Edward Grey . . . and on either side, categorically demanding the British Empire, the magnificent figures of the German Emperor and the Crown Prince”

Wimpffen, for he stands there as the impersonation of the deepest tragedy and the

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most terrible misfortune that could befall man. He has just been struck by the blow which the terms of capitulation involve for him and all France. He can bear no more—he has risen to go! But he totters, and has to support himself on the table and a chair. The light of the lamp falls upon his face, which betrays the deepest anguish and grief.

An engraving of this salutary work, as an object-lesson, should be in the offices of every Foreign Secretary, that they may see in Wimpffen their own fate if they dare to lift a finger against Germany. For this is not the last capitulation picture to be painted. There will be another yet! I see it in my mind's eye. I see the false Sir Edward Grey cowering in Wimpffen's place, and on either side, categorically demanding the British Empire, the magnificent figures of the German Emperor and the Crown Prince.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GERMAN PRESS

IN Bapaume I am quartered on an old French lawyer named Cossart. He is polite but stubborn. He simply will not see that the conquest of France by Germany is the best thing that could happen, nor that France has brought it all on herself. It was the more odd, considering that he had fought in the war of 1870, and had been taken prisoner by the Germans. I did my best to make him realize his folly, but in vain.

It was my fortune here to have as cicerone Duke Adolf Friedrich of Mecklenburg, an old friend and quite a decent geographer. Under his guidance I watched the fighting.

Not till now had I seen the German warriors at their glorious work. But now we visit the batteries, and I am permitted

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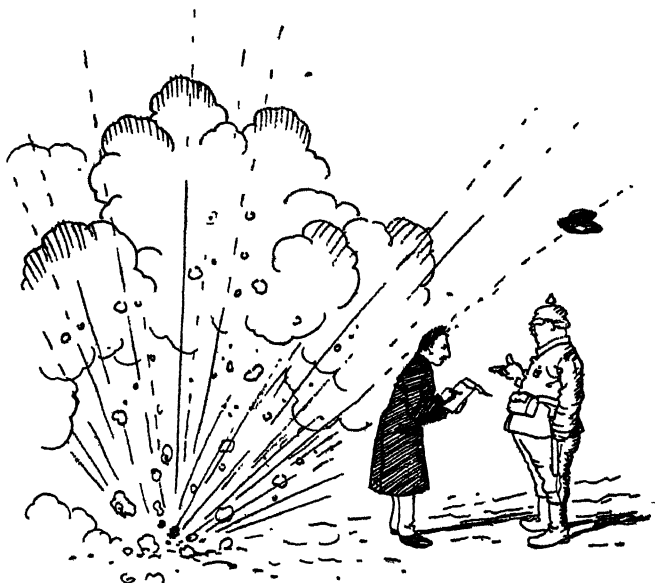
every kind of investigation. Why I was not shot by the French marksmen proves the inferiority of their aim, for again and again I was exposed to their fire. I ran risks also from our own side—I mean the Germans’—but one is bound to do this in the interest of the Muse of History. The warning word “*Deckung !*” (“Take cover !”) seldom found me prepared for safety. One cannot interrupt a good sentence.

It is impossible sufficiently to praise the German military routine. At every turn efficiency confronts the observer. Take the method of firing a gun. In France or England this is, of course, left to chance. Anyone can do it, at any moment. But in Germany not so. “Load !” commands the head of the battery, a captain. “*Fertig zum Feuer !*” (“Ready to fire !”)—and directly after, “*Feuer !*” (“Fire !”)—and the guns are discharged. Immediately a spout of fire issues from the gun-muzzle, accompanied by a report which rends the air and causes the ground to shake for some distance around. Then is heard that peculiar, horrible whistle

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through the air, as the projectile sweeps the space which separates us from the French positions. Nor can the French or English



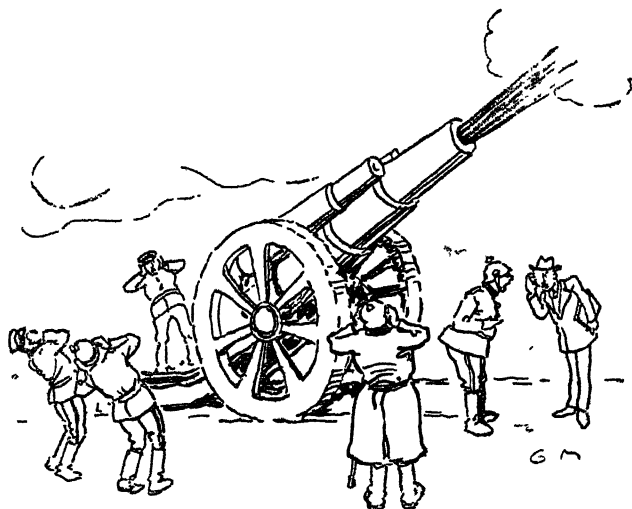
“I am permitted every kind of investigation”

guns, if they have any, rival the efficient Germans' in noise.

At Bapaume is published a little army newspaper which tells nothing but the truth, thus following the same honourable principles as the rest of the German Press.

THE GERMAN PRESS

This Press knows its enormous responsibility towards the nation and towards the fighting armies. For the soldiers, whose duty it is



“Nor can the French or English guns, if they have any, rival the efficient Germans’ in noise”

to bear the sweat and labour of the day, and to spill their blood for the Fatherland, nothing but the truth, the pure honest truth, is good enough. In the Entente countries the Press has an extra and exceedingly important duty, which the German Press is spared, namely to fire the soldiers’ courage,

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and to keep burning the flame of hope among the population. The German Press has no need to fire the nation's courage, for it burns with a pure and clear flame. The German people insist from their Press that they shall be told the *whole* truth, whether gladdening or not. Good news is not exaggerated, bad news is not minimized. Why I go to the trouble of saying this with so much emphasis, I cannot think. The fact remains that for pure unadulterated veracity, there is nothing like Wolff's Bureau and the German papers.

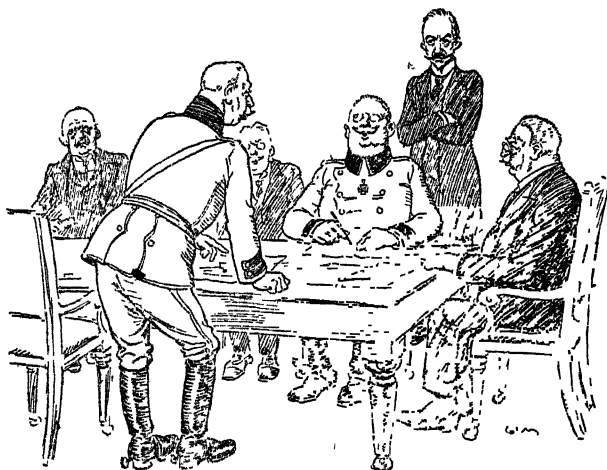
At Vouziers I attend the Protestant church service and hear a wonderful sermon from Pastor Achselträger. No one can preach like the Germans. No one can listen to sermons like the Germans. Taking the Epistle to the Romans as his subject, he spoke on the strength which the Gospel gives. The New Testament is one long justification of modern warfare. Were it not so he, as a minister, would long since have relinquished his salary. From that he passed to the stirring world conflict which now filled every one's thoughts. He spoke



Pastor Achselträger

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

of the irresistible power sometimes imparted to a people with the knowledge that it has a ruler who likewise is a real leader, and is, in a peculiarly intimate sense, the friend of



“Blessed are the meek”

God and participator in His secrets. The Emperor was such a one. The Emperor had done all within human power to avert the war, he said. The Emperor wanted peace, but when He was forced into the war He knew what His position was and understood what the people asked of Him, and

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trusting in His people He did not hesitate to strike a blow for Germany's existence and future.

God would punish England, let no one doubt that. The Germans were assured of eternal bliss, for did it not say among the beatitudes, "Blessed are the meek" ? *

It was a great homily, and I had difficulty in not putting something into the plate.

* I find that Pastor Achselträger was not the originator of this form of compliment. A writer from that very disappointing country, America, one Mark Twain, applied it once to the English. But that was absurd. Every one knows that the English are not meek. On the other hand, they have inherited, or rather grasped, more of the earth than the gentle Germans have ; and of the sun too.—H. S.



CHAPTER IX

THE TRIUMPH OF COUNT ZEPPELIN

THE headquarters of the Zeppelins are a revelation of German efficiency and character. Each shed is like a railway terminus; each airship is like the apotheosis of *wurst* (sausage), the national food. Every time a German looks up and sees one of these monsters of the blue, these Leviathans of the ether, he is reminded simultaneously of spirit and matter: the brave German determination to master all the secrets of science and machinery, and the reward of toil when work is over and the blessed dinner-bell rings.

But the authorities are wise and do not permit the Zeppelins to fly too often. It is not well in these strenuous times for people to look up too much. Their eyes must be applied to their daily toil, ammuni-

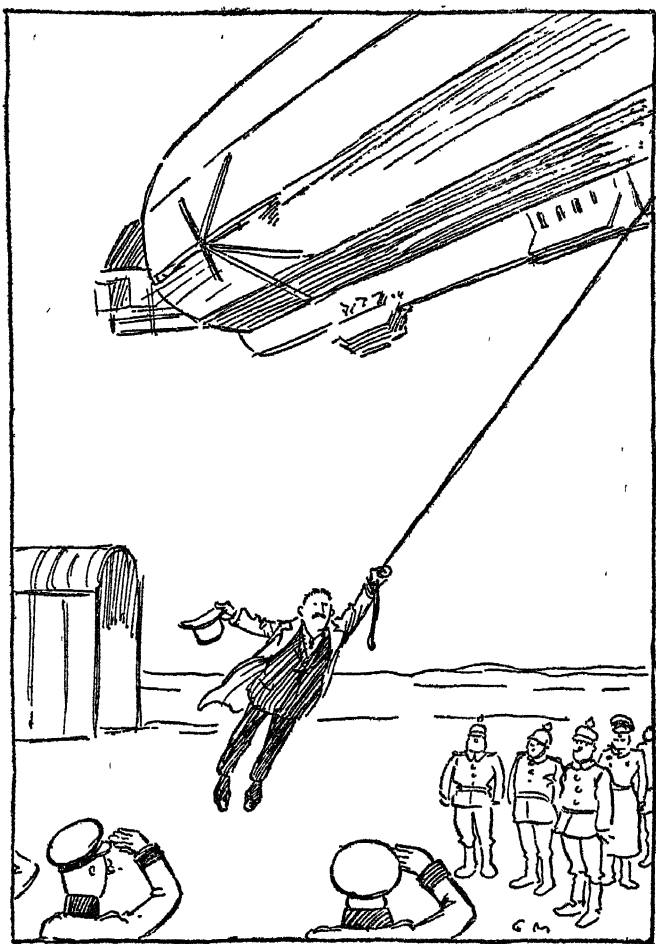


“Every time a German looks up and sees one of these Leviathans of the ether he is reminded simultaneously of spirit and matter”

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tion must be made, door handles melted, bread tickets printed, and so forth, and hence the comparative inactivity of these marvellous raiders of the air. Foolish persons, unaware of the true reason, have thought that there were defects in the invention : that they were not fitted for long journeys ; that they presented too easy a target to an unscrupulous foe : that they could not face a strong wind ; that they could not carry a sufficient weight of bombs. Not at all. It is purely that the sight of these glorious creatures is too unsettling to the honest German. It makes him romantic, and the watchword of the nation is strenuosity.

But when they have set out, how nobly have the Zeppelins behaved, and with what pride must Count Zeppelin review their career ! How narrowly the English towns have been missed shows to what a pitch of accuracy the bomb-throwers have reached. Time and again have meadows been struck. The deaths of old men, women, and even babies, testify to the power of this new and glorious engine of destruction, and most



"I made a brief trip myself "

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

nobly have they carried out the German military maxim, "The race that wrecks the cradle rules the world."

By reason of holding on to one of the ropes of a Zeppelin I made a brief trip myself, and I bear witness to the glory of German flight. I have been in many and various vehicles, and have tried most methods of locomotion, from Lama-back in Thibet to ski-ing in Sierra Leone, but hanging on to a Zeppelin comes first. Here, as everywhere else in this amazing country, one feels that German efficiency is beyond praise.

But I soon let go. It is no wish of mine to see the total demolition of London, even though the news might give me no pain. As it happened, however, I might have hung on, for the Zeppelin changed its mind and decided not to destroy the English capital that day, after all.

Count Zeppelin, who himself showed me over his factory, is one of the most fascinating Germans I ever met. Though old and burdened with Iron Crosses, he still holds himself erect. I was greatly interested by the inflating

COUNT ZEPPELIN

department. The gas which fills the many balloons that are contained in the greater



“Would it not be grand if we could see the sky full of these airships, all impregnable and all raining death?”

envelope is supplied, it may not be generally known, by Wolff's Bureau.

As we were leaving, the Count remarked to me, “Would it not be grand if we could see the sky full of airships, all impregnable,

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and all raining death? Would not that be a glorious justification of German culture and the sacred Emperor's lifelong devotion to peace?" To that there was, of course, only one answer.



CHAPTER X

THE CROWN PRINCE

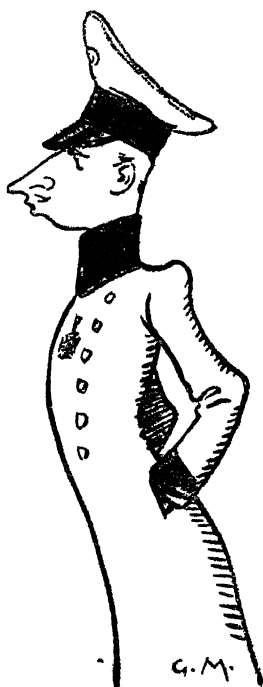
ON, on, still on, is our watchword. The grey car eats up the miles, as a Thibetan wolf consumes the Lamas that infest the mountains of that strange land.

Suddenly we pause. We are at the chateau in which the hope of the universe and the head of the fifth army—the Crown Prince of Germany—is lodged. I am to dine with him ; but before dining, he is to distribute Iron Crosses as an appetiser.

The chateau where we are staying belongs to an aristocratic French lady. When the war broke out she moved to Bordeaux. As she is not a collector of works of art, bibelots or anything valuable, she will find on her return after the contest, that her chateau, her estates, and the beautiful park, are more or less still there.

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

The Crown Prince William is tall, slim, and royally straight, dressed in a dazzling



“Gaily whistling the ‘Hymn of Hate’”

white tunic and wearing the Iron Cross of the first and second class. Gaily whistling the “Hymn of Hate” he walked with a firm step between the lines of soldiers. No one

THE CROWN PRINCE

could have failed to notice its firmness. An English prince—how he would have tottered !



“Before dining he is to distribute Iron Crosses
as an appetiser”

An adjutant followed him, carrying in a basket a number of Iron Crosses. The Crown Prince took one and handed it to the nearest officer, whom he thanked for the services

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which he had rendered to his Emperor and country, and then with a hearty handshake he congratulated the hero whom he had thus honoured. Only in Germany are handshakes like this. But then the Germans do everything to perfection.

All the regular guests at the royal dinner-parties were present, except the Emperor Himself. He and His son rarely find the room big enough for both. The look of ineffable affection in Dr. Lyttelton's eyes I shall never forget.

Dear old Grand Admiral von Tirpitz was more jovial than ever and disappeared under the table half-way through the meal.

"Sub-marining," said the Crown Prince with a dazzling smile.

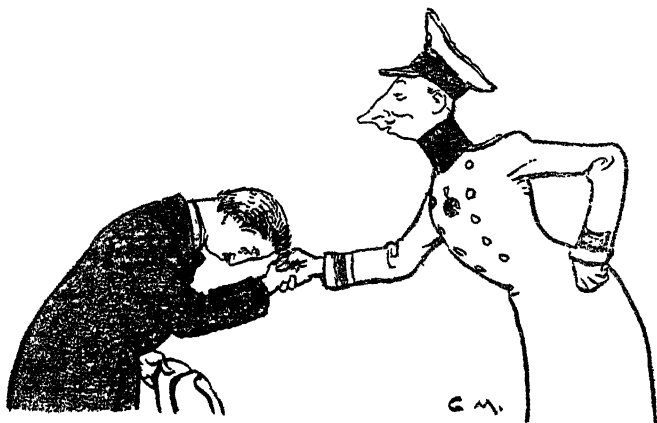
Would you like to know what the German Crown Prince, the Crown Prince of Prussia, eats? Here is the menu: cabbage soup, boiled beef with horse-radish and potatoes, wild duck with salad, fruit, wine, and coffee with cigars. Where else would you find such frugality? Before we partook we all joined reverently in asking the same



“Dear old Grand Admiral von Tirpitz
was more jovial than ever”

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

blessing which had preceded our Spartan meal at the Emperor's board—"God punish England!" I feel sure that I heard the



"The Crown Prince, like the Emperor, began with Thibet"

Crown Prince, who has a pretty wit, add
"And be quick about it."

And what would you guess the conversation was about? It is hard to say exactly, but we travelled, he and I, over almost the whole world with the ease bred by familiarity. The Crown Prince, like the Emperor, began with Thibet, and from there it was but a step across the Himalayas to the palms

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of the Hugli Delta, the pagodas of Benares, the silver moonlight over Taj Mahal, the tigers of the jungle and the music of the crystal waves of India beating against the rocks of Malabar point.

India in some curious way suggested England, of which the Crown Prince spoke with some feeling. That a country whose guest he had been, in India, should declare war on Germany, was, he thought, a particularly callous outrage. "After I had cleared the jungle of all those tigers too," he said. His fine features expressed scorn.

"I have seen the English papers," he said. "They know nothing. They know so little that in a series of caricatures I and my Father are shown in company as the Two Willies. As if we ever did anything together!" he added, with a regal snort.

"They also accuse us of frightfulness," he went on. "The Germans frightful? No nation is so handsome." I agreed. I wish Mr. William Archer had been there.

We talked much about the war and its horrors, and the terrible sacrifices it demands,

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"But it cannot be helped," said the Crown Prince, "our Fatherland asks us to give all we have, and *we will, we must* win, even if the whole world takes up arms against us."

"*Hoch!*" (here's to) was all that I could summon strength to reply, so moved was I by the spirit of this young man.

His Highness was then kind enough to give me some most valuable and original views on warfare. "Of the fighting men one nowadays sees practically nothing," he said, "for they are concealed by the ground and in the trenches, and it is rather dangerous to get too close to a bayonet charge—unless one's duty takes one there. Generally speaking, the distance between the fighting forces increases with the improvement in fire-arms. Those who have the best artillery have the best prospects of winning. Those that can shoot straightest are more likely to succeed than those whose aim is deficient. Numbers count in warfare too. God is on the side of the big battalions."

Here I committed the only *faux pas* on my whole trip. Not hearing the son of

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the All Highest quite distinctly, I asked, "Did you say God is on the side of the big Italians?"

"For heaven's sake, no!" he replied. "*Donner und blitzen!* (thunder and lightning) don't refer to big Italians, or, indeed, to Italians of any kind. I said 'big battalions' on whose side God always is, unless they are opposed to Germans, and then, of course, He is against them. 'To see a battle,'" he continued, "is practically impossible—not even the Commander directing it sees much of it, his direction is effected by telephone.* A uniform that merges in colour with the soil

* The *Figaro* publishes an account of a scene which it states took place in the month of August at the Hôtel de Cologne, in Luxembourg. When the German Emperor blamed a General for the losses sustained in capturing Longwy, that officer replied: "Your Majesty, if my soldiers advanced in close formation against Longwy and were thus uselessly massacred, it was on the orders of your scamp of a son, who, at a safe distance of thirteen miles behind the front, kept on sending the telephonic order 'to the assault, always to the assault.'"

Having spoken thus the General bowed and left the Imperial presence amid general stupefaction. On the pavement before the hotel he blew his brains out.—*Translator.*

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is better than one that is noticeable. Good generals are better than bad."

All through this gracious, brilliant and manly harangue, delivered with charming modesty, I sat entranced.

The Crown Prince, I must add, is one of the most remarkable men I have ever met. He can do nothing in an ordinary way. Riding beside him once in his car, I noticed the ease and address with which he turned up his collar and resumed his motor goggles, and how difficult it became to recognize him. It was then that his Imperial and Royal Highness turned half round to me and said unassumingly that nothing pleased him more than to find that he was supported and understood by the soldiers. He considered it the first duty of a prince to show himself worthy of the confidence of his whole people, and for his own part he could not imagine a greater happiness than to occupy such a position in the minds of the German people. He wondered if it would ever be his fortune.

A few evenings later, I was sitting in my

THE CROWN PRINCE

room when a knock came at the door. "*Herein*" (come in) I called with the voice of a corporal. In steps the Crown Prince with a large volume under his arm. I could



"I could have swooned"

have swooned, but I had presence of mind to ask my august guest to be seated on the sofa. He did so. O the ineffable charm of his manner of sitting !

The book which the Crown Prince had brought with him, and which he asked me to accept as a memento of him, was entitled *Deutschland in Waffen* (Germany under Arms). The work, produced by the Crown Prince

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with the assistance of eminent experts, was dedicated to His father the Emperor, and it had thus a special interest for me, who had dedicated a work on travel in Asia to the late King Edward when Prince of Wales. The introduction, written by the Crown Prince himself, foretells a general conflagration which no diplomatist can defer. This conflagration which Crown Prince William so unerringly and mysteriously foretold is now raging before our very eyes. Will he be justified in his steadfast faith in the people over which he is destined one day to reign? The writing on the wall from Ypres to Przemyśl, from Kiao Chau to Togoland, from Kiel to the Dardanelles, from the *Emden* to the *Falaba*, is telling its tale. Here is a nation which cannot go under and which never will be conquered.

CHAPTER XI

BELGIUM

AND now, any chance of visiting the champagne district being finally abandoned — now for Belgium, where I am confident of finding every thing as perfect as in France. I mean as regards the Germans. For the Belgians one cannot help feeling sorrow, as at every step one is reminded of the misfortune of having lost one's liberty in one's own country. And one thinks with horror of how it would feel to be placed in the same situation, were Sweden not so splendidly neutral. A moral judgment is now being passed over Europe. Woe to the people which has not in time put its house in order, or which relies on paper treaties and declarations when force sits in the judgment seat and when none but the strong and wakeful inspire respect in *all* directions.

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

We meet handsome soldiers everywhere ; Belgium has become one vast barracks or *Champ de Mars*. The men march along with the lighthearted step of young soldiers and sing as if they were going to a harvest festival, with flowers tied to the rifle barrel and more flowers in wreaths round their necks. With such a spirit, how can Germany lose ? Think of this, and then of the English and French being flogged on the march by their officers.

It is thrilling to be on the scene of so historic a German victory as Waterloo.

Once more the Prussians have taken charge of the spot where the bravery and loyalty of their ancestors under the iron will of Blücher broke Napoleon's strength and gave the British general a victory which he alone would never have been able to achieve. Some day the facts will come out as to the great part played by the Prussian Navy in the battle of Trafalgar ; but the time is not yet.

I find myself liking Belgium. For one thing it is so light at night, owing to the

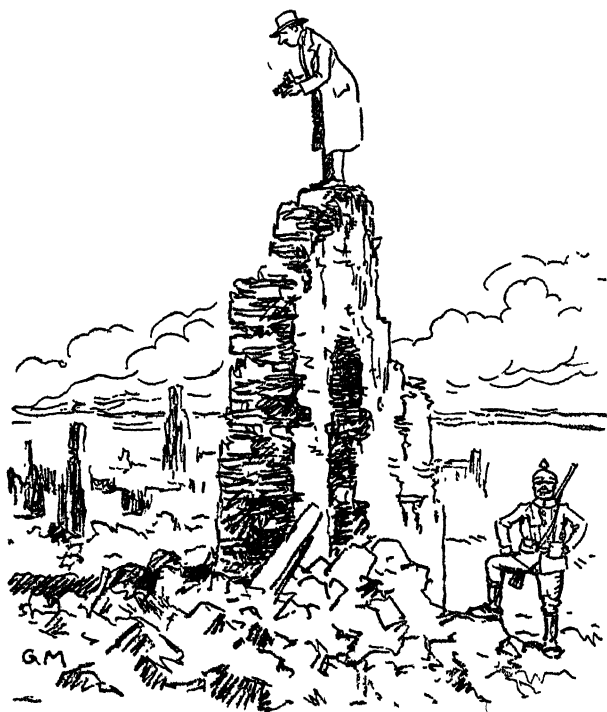
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“We meet handsome soldiers everywhere”

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

burning towns and villages. But it must be clearly understood, in spite of English lies, that most of these conflagrations and devas-



“Most of these conflagrations and devastations have been the work of the inhabitants”

tations have been the work of the inhabitants. The Germans never destroy unless provoked ; and every one knows how slow
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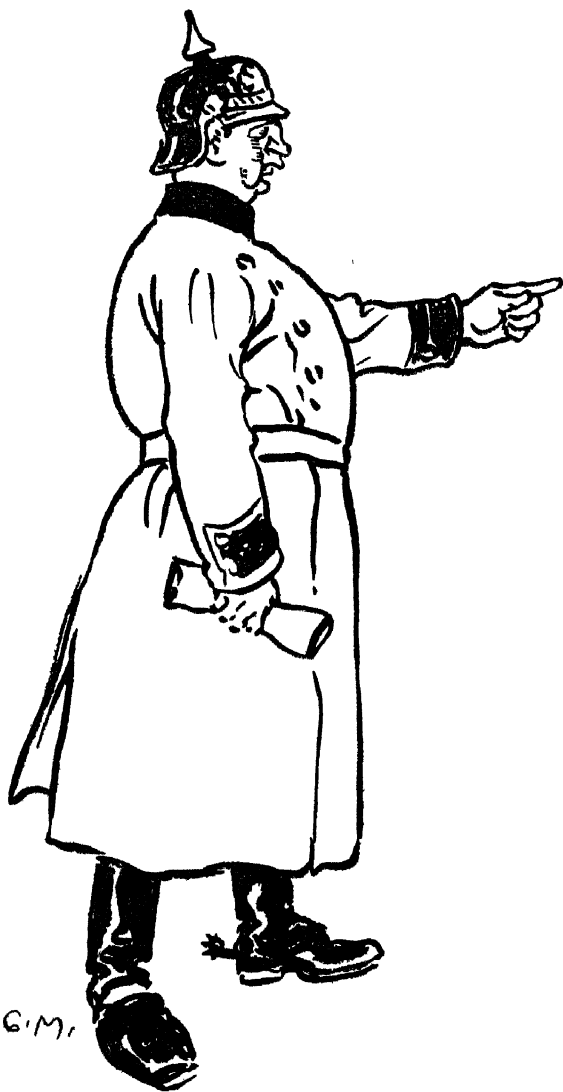
BELGIUM

to anger these blond blue-eyed giants are.* Very little damage has been done. Even as it is, Louvain is practically what it was save for the loss of the library ; but new books are easily written. Antwerp is barely touched, and the demolition of one district was the means of settling an old dispute between the owners of the city.

But when one comes to Ostend, there one is shocked indeed, for here the damage was inflicted wholly by English naval guns ; and this, although it was not thought that they would fire at all, as the killing of a hundred or two of Germans and the evacuation of the place would not make up for the loss of the considerable British capital supposed to be invested in the town.

Part of this bombardment I witnessed, and

* Mr. William Archer is very cross with me for saying nothing about German brutalities. How can I if there have been none ? The English soldier who first called the Uhlans "ewe lambs" stumbled by accident on the greatest verity which the war has produced. Mr. Archer is also cross with me for praising Germany without stint. But why not ? Mr. Archer is Scotchman enough to know that no wise man quarrels with his bread-and-butter. It is an Archer's *métier* to shoot at a frog, not a Swede.—H.S.



“Astounding insolence!’ I heard them mutter”

BELGIUM

I can endorse the comment of three of my German officer friends at its commencement. "Astounding insolence!" I heard them mutter.

One is, of course, sorry for the Belgians. But they should not have been so helpless, nor so out of date—so unalive to modernity and the true meaning of culture—as to trust to treaties. Little nations have always been a nuisance, and always will be. Henceforward, however, all will be well with Belgium, for she will belong to the greatest and humanest power on earth.



CHAPTER XII

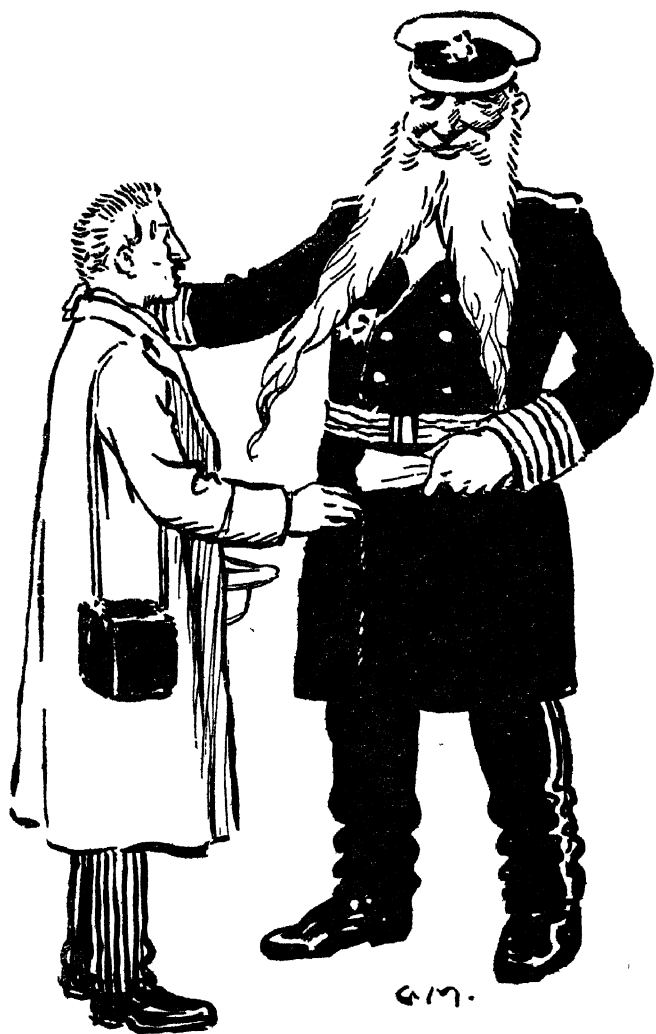
WITH THE GALLANT SUBMARINES

IT was my genial friend, Grand Admiral von Tirpitz, who made it easy for me to accompany a German submarine on one of its chivalrous expeditions.

“My dear Hun Svedend,” he said in his rich, humorous tones, “you have been everywhere at the front, and, like the man in the great German poet Shakespeare’s play, have ‘found good in everything.’ Now you must go to sea, and, if you can, find equal merit there. I say if you can,” he added, “but, of course you will have no difficulty, you are such a well-disciplined observer.”

I thanked him for the compliment. “My dear Grand Admiral,” I added, “nothing would give me greater pleasure than to visit your magnificent navy. I love canal life.”

“Ah, yes, the navy,” he replied. “But I



G.M.

“ ‘Nonsense, my dear Hun Svedend,’ the Grand Admiral replied ”

IN GENTLEST GERMANY

was thinking rather of our fine new policy of blockade. The navy—the navy can wait. But the submarines are busy. Here is a signed permit entitling you to make a voyage with a submarine. I insist on your using it.”

I had difficulty in expressing my gratitude for such a privilege and such confidence in my descriptive powers.

“You are the first civilian who has been allowed to do this,” the genial old sea-dog added.

I hastened to say that I did not think that a foreigner should be thus distinguished. “Ought not a German journalist to have the honour?” I inquired.

“Nonsense, my dear Hun Svedend,” the Grand Admiral replied. “Besides, we think of you as a German. I assure you we do. Here, take the permit, and be off with you!”

I hurried to my hotel, suddenly remembering the most important business at Stockholm; but before I could pack, a naval lieutenant entered the room saying that a

THE GALLANT SUBMARINES

submarine was waiting for me at Antwerp, and I must accompany him at once if, as he had been told, I wanted the time of my life.

He was a charming fellow, with perfect manners—a typical German—and I could not but comply.

In another second I was in his car, which he drove himself, and in a few minutes we were on board.

I have indulged in many modes of locomotion, from the camels of Takla-makan to the rickshaws of Kioto, but it is a solemn fact that I had never yet travelled in a submarine. Here then was a new experience.

The commander met me on the periscope : a charming man, full of humour and shrewdness. “I had never,” he said, “dreamed of such a piece of good fortune as to have so illustrious an explorer as a passenger. Do you know the bottom of the sea ?”

I disclaimed the acquaintance and added that I had no wish to make it.

He laughed and said that submarines

'IN GENTLEST GERMANY

were kittle cattle. "You have made your will?" he asked, later. "But no matter, let us be off."

Here, as everywhere, I was struck by the perfection of the German machine. No sooner had the commander given the word than the engines began to move. No delay, no appeals for more time, no excuses about there being no petrol, as there might so easily be on an English vessel.

Over our cigars that night, as we sped on our way towards the English waters where it was our mission to sink vessels bringing supplies to that country or to France, the commander talked with much vivacity and charm. He smoked with the consummate grace of all Germans—putting one end of the cigar in his mouth, and lighting the other. He dwelt on the necessity for this complete blockade and made it clear to me in his lucid German way how effectively it could be carried out by the twenty or thirty available submarines.

"Do you give notice of your intention to sink a vessel?" I asked.

THE GALLANT SUBMARINES

"Certainly not," he said, and he proceeded to convince me of the wisdom and mercy of his decision.

"And if you yourself are sunk, my dear commander?" I asked.



"Over our cigars that night"

"Oh, well," he replied, "we can but die once. And it is for the Fatherland."

To me this is once too often, but I did my best to fall into his spirit. Yet, after all, much as I admire Germany, it has no paternal relationship to me.

I retired to rest not less thoughtful than usual.

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On the next morning I had been sitting for some minutes at my port-hole watching the fish swim by, and identifying them one by one—here a sardine, there a whale, here a kipper, there a gudgeon—when suddenly I heard the order to fire. I dashed to the observation-room beneath the periscope in time to see a torpedo speed from its lair in our bows at lightning speed and make for the huge hulk of an adjacent liner.

A terrific explosion followed, and we at once rose to the surface, in order, as I, in my ignorance, thought, to be ready to give assistance to the drowning passengers. But I had underrated the iron inflexibility of German warfare. To this great people war, and especially this war, which they did not ask for and never wanted, is a real thing and must not be diluted by petty restrictions and academic rules.

The German conduct of the war is severe, but it is not cruel. In more than one respect it has demonstrated the impotence and futility of all conferences and conventions of Geneva, The Hague, and other places bearing names

THE GALLANT SUBMARINES

which now have an empty and illusory sound.

I felt sorry enough for the poor wretches in the water, but after all they were civilians, and every one knows what a monstrous part the civilians have played in this struggle. Look at Louvain, for example. Not a single window-pane there would have been broken had not the civilians fired.

Everything being quiet again, we moved off in the hope of finding another vessel.

"That ship, my dear commander," I said, "cannot be said exactly to be bringing supplies either to England or France. She was bound for South Africa with passengers."

"That's all right," he replied, "she was English."

"Awkward if there were Americans on board and they are drowned," I suggested.

"I doubt it," he said. "America has herself very well in hand."

At this moment we sighted another foe,

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a trawler hard at work, and there was no time for talk.

I had seen not a little activity among the German soldiers, but the crew of a German submarine beats even them. They are ceaseless in their vigilance and enterprise, and nothing but the exhaustion of our torpedo supply brought us back. England had wanted war, and England was certainly getting her fill, and was to get more than she had bargained for since the days of Wellington. And on her own seas, too, of which she fondly calls herself the mistress!

A poorer fight than her trawler and liner put up against our tiny submarine I never saw.

CHAPTER XIII

SUMMARY

AND now I finally lay down my pen in my study in Stockholm. My task is done. It was annoying not to have got to Rheims, but that is the fortune of war.

It is April the first, 1915, the centenary of the birth of that very second-rate statesman whom the German Emperor so promptly sent into retirement. That Bismarck still has a great name in Germany is inevitable, for there were popular circumstances in his favour. He was the limelight man in the magnificent triumph of 1870 ; he wore his helmet with distinction ; he was usually accompanied by an attractive breed of dog. But he was no Hohenzollern ; few men have been less like a Hohenzollern ; and it is the Hohenzollerns whom Germany



"My task is done"

SUMMARY

will have in the long run to thank. It is they or no one who have kept the *Wacht am Rhein* (Watch on the Rhine). This war is theirs.

I write, as I say, on April the first, eight months since England forced the peaceful Fatherland to take up arms. Eight months of war waged so splendidly, as I have shown, by efficient Germany. Everywhere she has either progressed, tactically withdrawn, or stood still, but always with dignity, always with charm and courtesy.

Alone Germany must have conquered, such is her indomitable will and righteousness. But it was given her to win the love of the Austrians and Turks, and they too are magnificently furthering her efforts. Who can ever again, contemplating the aged Emperor, Franz Josef, as the war progresses, refer to the "luckless Hapsburgs?" And Turkey—how grateful must Turkey be for all that Germany has done for her!

As for Germany in the East, all there is safe and sound. Von Hindenburg has been irresistible, and Russia may be said no longer



“It is they [the Hohenzollerns] or no one who have kept the Watch on the Rhine”

SUMMARY

to exist. No wonder the German Emperor has just forbidden in the churches a hymn in which he is hailed as victorious. He is tired of the compliment. Victories have become monotonous to so original and sensitive and essentially humble a soul.

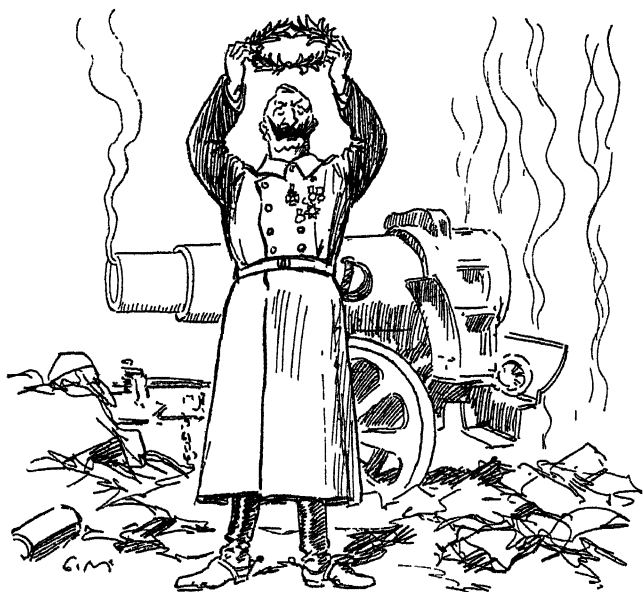
On the sea Germany is, after eight months, as she ever was. Her mighty fleet, which cost so many millions, is still practically intact and supreme. No one can touch it. Beneath the sea her victories are incessant: hardly a week without its triumph in the shape of a sunken collier, trawler, or ocean tramp.

There are critics of Germany who suggest that not to have reached Paris yet is comparative failure. Not so.

Paris as an objective was quickly given up, and very rightly, for Paris is no place for Germans. The French are so superficial, so trifling, that there could be no prosperity for the deep-souled, cultured Germans, the countrymen of Heine, in Paris. It is enough as a moral lesson to France that the brave Germans still are on her soil.

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Calais—the Germans turned their backs also on that very indifferent seaport, far too



“Victories have become monotonous to so . . .
sensitive and essentially humble a soul ”

near to perfidious England for a self-respecting nation to tolerate. No place from which the cliffs of Dover can, on a fine day, be seen is a suitable spot for Germans, who deserve always a prospect that is fair and clean. And yet I should like to think that with

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the aid of asphyxiating gas Germany might still prove her ability to get there if she really wished.

But instead of Paris and Calais, look at what Germany has already won in the world-struggle. Belgium. Here was a powerful country, gallant too, in its way formidable, resolute, armed to the teeth. Where is she now ? The military genius of Germany has laid her waste. Only a few miles of her territory does her poor King Albert still retain, while hundreds of thousands of her population are very rightly making a haven of England, the country which lured them on to ruin. But let these refugees beware ! A bitter fate can lie in store for those whom England has welcomed and honoured. Upon them can a strange obliquity of vision fall and a desperate desire to bite the hand that feeds. I speak from experience.

POSTSCRIPT

I hope I have made it clear throughout this work that though Germany was prepared for war and England was not, yet it is wholly England's war. Otherwise I have toiled in vain—or very nearly in vain.

H. S.



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